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Dr. Littmann, who accompanied the American Archaeological Expedition in Syria, 1899-1900, copied 134 Safaitic inscriptions, which, together with those copied by his predecessors, form the basis of his present work. He subjects the whole material to a new investigation and arrives at most important results. Of the 28 letters of the alphabet he finds that 16 were correctly identified by Halévy and five by Praetorius. The remaining seven letters are identified by Dr. Littmann, whose reasoning is in all points most convincing.

He also gives transcriptions of a number of the inscriptions, with translations and analyses, and adds a brief vocabulary of the texts treated, a *Schrifttafel*, and six plates of facsimiles. Dr. Littmann has also discovered the only date as yet found in these inscriptions. At the close of one of the inscriptions copied by him (No. 45) occur the words סנת הרב נבט "in the year of the war of the Nabateans", which can only refer to Trajan's campaign in 106 A. D. Dr. Littmann's work marks a decided advance in the decipherment of the Safaitic inscriptions, which now, thanks to his investigations, stands upon safe and solid ground. It is to be hoped that he will continue his studies and throw further light upon this interesting subject.

CHRISTOPHER JOHNSTON.

Tetrevangelium Sanctum iuxta simplicem Syrorum Versionem ad fidem Codicum, Massorae, editionum denuo recognitum, lectionum supellectilem quam conquisiverat PH. ED. PUSEY, A. M. auxit, digessit, edidit GEORGIUS HENRICUS GWILLIAM, S. T. B. (Oxonii, e typographeo Clarendoniano MDCCCCL. 4to, pp. xvi, 608.)

While the Syriac versions form an indispensable instrument for the textual criticism of the Bible, the versions of the New Testament are of much greater value in this respect than those of the Old Testament, as they were made at a relatively earlier period and are based on a text comparatively free from the corruptions and interpolations which have crept into the text of the Old Testament.

Four Syriac versions of the New Testament are known:—I. The Diatessaron, or Harmony of the Four Gospels, of Tatian; II. The Curetonian Version; III. The Sinaitic Version; and IV. The Peshittâ Version.

By some scholars the Diatessaron of Tatian is believed to have been composed in Syriac, at Edessa, about the year 172 A. D., while others hold that it was originally written in Greek and afterwards translated into Syriac. Although the work was highly

esteemed in the early Syriac Church it is now lost. St. Ephrem wrote a commentary upon it of which an Armenian version¹ has been preserved, and in 1888 the late Cardinal Ciasca published an Arabic version of the Diatessaron which is attributed to Abû-el Faraj ibn at-Tib.

The Curetonian version is probably to be placed in the interval between the years 150 and 250 A. D. It was published in 1858 from a manuscript, in the British Museum, some pages of which were lacking. Some years later Brugsch found the missing pages, which are now in the Berlin Museum, and they were published in 1872 by the late Dr. William Wright, Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge.²

The Sinaitic version, which seems to be of somewhat later date than the Curetonian, was discovered by Mrs. A. Lewis in the Convent of St. Catharine, on Mt. Sinai, and was published by its discoverer in 1894.³

While the date of the Peshittâ version of the New Testament cannot be definitely fixed, it was certainly in general use as the authorized text before the end of the 5th century A. D. when the separation of the Eastern and Western Syriac Churches took place, and it then contained, not only the four Gospels, but the Acts, the First Epistle of Peter, the First Epistle of John, the Epistle of James, and the Epistles of Paul. Although later than the other Syriac versions, the Peshittâ has a higher critical value on account of its very faithful and literal rendering of the original. The first edition of the Peshittâ version of the New Testament was published by Widmandstadt, at Vienna, in 1555. This edition has since been frequently republished in whole or in part: in the Polyglot of Paris, 1645; at Leyden, in 1630 by Pococke; in the well-known editions of Gutbir, Schaaf, and Lee; and more recently at Urmia in Persia, and at Mosul in Mesopotamia.⁴ But in view of the importance of the subject and of the great progress of Semitic studies in recent years, a critical revision of the published text of the Peshittâ has long been urgently needed.

¹ Published by Moesinger, Vienna, 1876. In 1881, Zahn attempted to restore the Diatessaron on the basis of this work. See also H. Hill and A. Robinson, *A Dissertation on the Gospel Commentaries of St. Ephrem the Syrian*, Edinburgh, 1896; Harris, *Fragments of the Commentary of Ephrem Syrus upon the Diatessaron*, London, 1895; Goussen, *Apocalypsis Sancti Johannis Versio Sahidica*, Leipzig, 1895.

² Cureton, *Remains of a very ancient Recension of the Gospels*, London, 1858; W. Wright, *Fragments of the Curetonian Gospels*, London, 1872.

³ Mrs. A. Lewis, *The four Gospels in Syriac transcribed from the Syriac palimpsest*, Cambridge, 1894. See also, *Some pages of the four gospels*, Cambridge, 1896; A. Merx, *Die vier Kanonischen Evangelien*, Berlin, 1897; Holzley, *Der neuentdeckte Codex Syrus Sinaiticus*, Munich, 1896; A. Bonus, *Collatio Codicis Lewisiani rescripti*, Oxford, 1896.

⁴ The distinguished native Syriac scholar Father Paul Bedjan has, for some years, been engaged in the preparation of a new critical edition of the Peshittâ version of the Old and New Testaments, which is to be printed at Leipzig from the beautiful Syriac types of W. Drugulin.

Many years ago the late Philip Edward Pusey, son of the well-known Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford, began to collate ancient manuscripts of the Peshittâ in order to discover how far the traditional text, first published by Widmandstadt and reproduced with little alteration by subsequent editors, might be considered to represent the text prevalent in the ancient Syriac Church. After Mr. Pusey's death the work was continued by Mr. G. H. Gwilliam, in whose hands the critical materials accumulated to such an extent as to necessitate a considerable expansion of the original design. Thus, although Mr. Gwilliam was the final editor, the present volume results from the labors of both scholars. The thorough, and at the same time the arduous, nature of their work may be gathered from the fact that the text of this new critical edition of the Peshittâ Gospels is based on the evidence of no less than forty-two manuscripts proceeding from various localities, and dating from the 5th to the 12th century. All this abundant material has been carefully collated, the results of the numerous collations have been utilized with sound judgment and scholarship, and the whole work is edited with great skill and conscientious accuracy. The investigations of the editors establish the fact that the text of the editio princeps of 1555 is almost identical with that of the most ancient manuscripts. But while the traditional text of the Peshittâ is thus in large measure confirmed, the editors have been able to make valuable emendations in a number of passages where the manuscripts used by Widmandstadt were defective or corrupt. The vocalization follows in the main the Jacobite Massoretic manuscripts, but in the notes the Nestorian Massora is frequently cited. In accordance with the arrangement of the most ancient manuscripts, the text is divided into paragraphs, and the Syriac system of sections and canons, here for the first time given in full, is indicated throughout. A very faithful and literal Latin translation adds greatly to the value of the work. The book is of convenient size, and its typography and general arrangement are excellent. In the Tetreuangelium we have an edition of the Peshittâ Gospels which fully meets the critical requirements of modern scholarship, and the editors have earned the thanks of all biblical scholars for their valuable work.

GABRIEL OUSSANI.